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BankRI Collection Leads to 6,382 Books for Kids

Community generosity helps to provide an influx of titles for new Books Are Wings programs

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – When Bank Rhode Island (BankRI) customers and staff have an opportunity to help the community, they never disappoint, and the bank’s recently-completed Children’s Book Drive was no exception. Held throughout the month of March at all 20 of BankRI’s branches, the effort in support of Books Are Wings led to 6,382 books for local kids.

“There aren’t enough words to express how grateful we are for the way the community comes out in support of our book drive and what that means for the children who benefit from their kindness,” said Patricia O’Donnell-Saracino, BankRI’s VP of Community Relations. “Time and again, the opportunity to help others brings out the best in people, and Rhode Islanders are all about helping one another. Thank you to everyone who participated.”

This marked the 12th year in which BankRI has partnered with the Pawtucket-based [Books Are Wings](#) to support its mission to put free books in the hands of children across the Ocean State. Annually, the organization’s unique programs provide more than 70,000 books for kids to keep and build their own at-home libraries. All of the books collected this year have been earmarked for two of Books Are Wings’ newest programs, **Tale Mail** for preschoolers and the **Read to 100 Challenge** for school-age kids.

Introduced last fall, **Tale Mail** provides families with literature and interactive learning activities to help extend literacy learning from school to home. The effort partners with early learning centers and preschool programs to supply books and literacy-based crafts that are shared with families. With the **Read to 100 Challenge**, Books Are Wings challenges students to collectively read 100 books as a classroom, as many times as they can, over the course of the school year. The organization provides all materials, including books and ‘tracking’ posters. Classrooms that meet the goal get a special book party celebration.

“The books from the BankRI collection are not only vital to our programs, they also represent how meaningful it is for our community to come together to share a love of reading,” said Jocelynn White, Executive Director of Books Are Wings. “We are so thankful for our partnership with the Bank and for the generosity of people across the state who support the drive every year. What a difference it makes!”

Among BankRI’s locations across the state, its Highland Avenue branch in East Providence led the way by collecting 1,356 books. Coming in right behind were the Woonsocket branch with 774 books and Smithfield at 668. Since 2011, BankRI’s Children’s Book Drive has resulted in more than 34,000 donated books.

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About Bank Rhode Island

Bank Rhode Island, a wholly owned subsidiary of Brookline Bancorp, Inc. (NASDAQ:BRKL), is a full-service, FDIC-insured financial institution headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island. The bank operates 20 branches and more than 30 ATMs throughout Providence, Kent, Newport and Washington Counties. For more information, visit www.bankri.com.